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Rhode Island Library Association

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# Rhode Island Library Association Bulletin

Volume No. 58 No. 2

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December 1985

## What Does It Mean To Be a Children's Librarian?

*by Diane Pacheco*

Dodo bird. Great auk. Children's Librarian. The first two are extinct. The third, according to many published reports, is rapidly approaching the same fate. Job vacancies are attracting few applicants. In many cases, those who do apply are not truly qualified. Is the profession's demise imminent; or, to paraphrase Mark Twain, have the reports of the children's librarians' death been greatly exaggerated?

A related, though less publicized, concern is the state of the profession for children's librarians currently working in the field. Just what is it that we do? How well do we do it? What do others expect from us? What should we expect from ourselves? If we are to advocate that library science students choose our specialty, should we not assess what is encompassed by that specialty? Is it time to sit back and really consider what children's librarianship is all about?

On May 10 - 11, 1985, a symposium convened by the New Jersey State Library on The Role of Youth Services in Public Libraries attracted 189 participants from 24 states. As Melody Allen was on vacation, I attended the conference with Peggy Shea of DSLS. The lectures and follow-up discussions focused on many issues that have great impact upon children's services. Having been confronted with so much information, many of the participants left the conference believing that the process of self-evaluation had just begun.

My report on the symposium (available from DSLS) delineated several topics that had been explored. After having read the report, Melody extracted four questions that had concerned many of the conference participants. These questions formed the basis of the meeting What Does it Mean to be a Children's Librarian? held at the Cranston Public Library on October 7, 1985. Twenty-five librarians, including both children's librarians and directors, formed five small groups and considered each issue.

### I. HAVE WE FOCUSED ON PRE-SCHOOLERS TO THE NEGLECT OF OLDER CHILDREN?

Most of the participants believed that the younger children do receive more attention. Possible explanations are the increasing demand from patrons for pre-school services, the desire to reach children at an early age, the fact that pre-schoolers are easier to work with, and the reality that pre-school programs increase circulation. Another reason could be that school age children are busy with other activities and do not look to the library as their main source of entertainment. They do, however, need and receive a different kind of service: reference and reader's advisory. School-public library co-operation was considered a key element in providing adequate service to the older children as most of their library work is assignment oriented.



## II. DO WE SPEND TOO LITTLE TIME ON COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT AND TOO MUCH ON PROGRAMMING?

The groups felt that collection development does tend to be given a lower priority than does programming. Although programming is time consuming, it does attract patrons and meets their demand. In collection development, weeding is as important as adding; but often there isn't enough time to do public service, outreach, programs, and collection development; so book selection is done at home and weeding isn't done at all. There is also a high frustration level in collection development as many missing titles are out of print. Library schools were also cited for not training students sufficiently in collection development skills.

If, however, we acknowledge that service to school-age children is, to a large degree, dependent upon the strength of the materials in the library, collection development needs to receive greater attention. Possible solutions include the use of volunteers for programming and the need for children's librarians to talk to their directors when they feel there isn't time to do "everything".

## III. SHOULD WE PURCHASE "MARKETED" BOOKS (TV TIE-INS, SMURFS, CARE BEARS, CHOOSE YOUR OWN ADVENTURE, POP-UPS, ETC.) OR ONLY BOOKS OF LITERARY QUALITY?

"Yes", was the overwhelming response. There was a general agreement to be more assertive in discussing their problems with their directors instead of with other sympathetic, but powerless, children's librarians. Isolation can also be caused by physical conditions when the children's department is located on a different floor from the other library areas. It was suggested that children's librarians make an effort to learn what is going on in the other departments and to let staff know what is happening in the children's room. The discussion concluded with a tinge of militancy when it was asserted that children's librarians have a specific area of expertise and should not be made to apologize for it.

This field of expertise was explored further in the survey of "Competencies of Children's Librarians in Public Libraries: An Attitudinal Assessment." Several of the 45 questions dealt with management skills and were rated as being of great importance. Other questions that had significantly high responses

were in the areas of outreach, attitudes regarding children, programming, and theory.

What does it all mean? Children's librarians are aware that there is a need to assess the services that are being offered to children. Priorities should be set, management skills acquired, and assertiveness applied when they feel overwhelmed by the many tasks they are required to perform. Is children's librarianship dying? If the enthusiasm and commitment of the Rhode Island group is an indication, the answer has to be no. It is our hope that others can be convinced that the children's specialty is a challenging and rewarding career choice.

## news

Books, prints, and ephemera about New England of a \$25.00 value or more are being sought for a gala auction to benefit the Committee for a New England Bibliography. The concluding volumes will encompass all of New England. The auction will be held September 19, 1986 at Old Sturbridge Village. Coordinator for Rhode Island is Beth Perry, State Librarian (277-2473). Please contact her if you have a contribution which might be appropriate for the auction. Contributions are accepted anytime, but should be given by February 1986 to be included in the catalog.



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# jobline

The Rhode Island Library Association has established a minimum recommended salary of \$17,500 for a full-time beginning librarian in 1985.

**SUBSTITUTE SCHOOL LIBRARY MEDIA SPECIALIST:** Woonsocket Public School System. Must be certified as Teacher of Library Science by the Rhode Island Department of Education. Salary: \$40 per day. Application available from: Louis R. Leveille, Coordinator of Media Services, 108 High Street, Woonsocket, RI 02895 (401) 762-4440.

**HEAD REFERENCE LIBRARIAN** at the Brown University Library. Reports to the Assistant University Librarian for Public Services and Collection Development. Responsible for the administration of the Reference Department and the supervision of the reference staff; the provision of instruction on effective library usage; the planning and management of information technologies as they impact traditional reference services; and the selection and maintenance of the reference collections. Requirements: MLS degree from an ALA accredited library school; three years of reference experience in a research library, including administrative/supervisory responsibility; reading knowledge of one foreign language and a working knowledge of others; working knowledge of automated bibliographical retrieval systems and bibliographic instruction. Appointment range: \$27,088-\$34,500 based upon experience. Interested candidates should send letter of application, resume and names of three references to Norma Beach, Personnel Office, Brown University, Providence, RI 02912. Applications received by January 15, 1986, will be given first consideration. Brown University is an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Employer.

**LIBRARY TECHNICIANS:** 3 Positions: Woonsocket Education Department; must possess LT Certification. 1.Full Time: January-June, 1986; 2.Part-Time: 4 hours per day for the remainder of the 1985-86 school year; 3. Two Month Full Time: January-February 1986. Applications and job description may be obtained by calling 762-4440 ext. 118 and may be forwarded to Superintendent of Schools, 108 High Street, Woonsocket, RI 02895.

## Spring Book Fair

by Roberta A.E. Cairns

The Rhode Island Library Association has been asked by the Providence Journal-Bulletin to co-sponsor a Book Fair that is being held from March 16-20. Connie Lachowicz and I met with John Hazard at the Journal to discuss the plans and after that discussion, enthusiastic agreement to participate followed.

The Book Fair and accompanying programs are targeted for a pre-school through grade eight audience and their parents. From 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. each day, students will be bussed to the Fair and from 3 p.m. to 9 p.m., programs will be held for children and their parents. A featured speaker will present a program each evening from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m.

The Journal will plan the Book Fair and handle arrangements with publishers. In addition, all expenses for the Book Fair will be paid by the Journal Bulletin. RILA's responsibilities are three-fold:

1. To develop graded booklists of Rhode Island authors and illustrators.
2. To plan programs for the 3 to 7 time slot.
3. To provide volunteers to assist at the Book Fair.

In return, the Journal-Bulletin will divide the profits between the Summertime Fund and the Rhode Island Library Association.

A meeting has been held with several children's librarians throughout the State to determine how best to approach the booklists and programs. Providence Public Library was represented at the first meeting by Ginnie McKee, Sharon Angus, Roberta Smith, and Jackie Smith; Melody Allen represented DSLs; Diane Pacheco attended from Barrington Public Library; and Angel Randall attended from Cranston Public Library.

We have been attempting to develop a good line of communication between RILA and the Journal-Bulletin and we see this as a golden opportunity to do just that, by working with the newspaper staff on the Book Fair. In addition, RILA will make some financial gain.

Please join RILA in working on the Book Fair. Anyone interested in joining us to work with



the Journal-Bulletin Book Fair is welcome to attend our next meeting, Thursday, December 5th at 2 p.m. at the Cranston Public Library.

More details about the Book Fair will be in upcoming issues of the RILA Bulletin.

## people

**JANICE SIEBURTH**, formerly Reference Bibliographer at the library of the University of Rhode Island, was recently named Head of Reference.

**DENISE LISTOVITCH**, formerly of the Pawtucket Public Library, has been appointed Head of Technical Services at the Warwick Public Library.

**ALICE FORSSTROM**, Head of Children's Services and **KAY ANDERSON**, Head of Technical Services, both long time staff members of the Warwick Public Library, retired in November.

**ELAINE M. HEEBNER** is the new Volunteer Coordinator for the Providence Public Library.

**CAROL PARSINNEN**, a student at URI's Graduate School of Library and Information Studies, was the Rhode Island recipient of a Baker and Taylor Grassroots Grant. Rhode Island's Grassroots Grant winner is selected annually by the Rhode Island Junior Members Round Table.

**ANN CRAWFORD**, Director of the Cross Mills Public Library in Charlestown, was recently honored by the Chariho Business and Professional Woman's Club as its 1985 Woman of the Year.

## dates

**December 12th**, Young Adult Round Table: "Current Fiction", Cranston High School East, 3PM.

**January 9th**, Young Adult Round Table: "Books: Medium, Rare, and Well Done", North Kingstown Public Library, 3PM.

**January 9th**, Massachusetts Library Association Midwinter Conference, Holy Cross College, Worcester.

**January 16th**, Info/Ex: "Who Has What? Reference Resources of the Providence Public Library", Smith-Hill Branch, Providence Public Library, 10AM.

**January 18th - 23rd**, American Library Association Midwinter Conference, Chicago.

**January 23rd**, RILA Personnel Committee Seminar: "Conflicting Goals", Warwick Public Library, 7PM - 8:30PM.

## bulletin board

- The Rhode Island State Library's State Publications Clearinghouse for Libraries has named its State Publications Depository Libraries. Full depositories are: East Providence Public Library, North Kingstown Public Library, Pawtucket Public Library, Providence Public Library, Warwick Public Library, Westerly Public Library, and the libraries of Brown University, Providence College, Rhode Island College, the Rhode Island Historical Society, and the University of Rhode Island. Selective depositories are: Barrington Public Library, Coventry Public Library, Cranston Public Library, Newport Public Library, South Kingstown Public Library, Woonsocket Public Library, the Department of State Library Services, the State Law Library, and the libraries of Bryant College, the Community College of Rhode Island, Roger Williams College, and Salve Regina College.

- The New England Chapter of the Music Library Association (NEMLA) is one of twelve regional chapters of the national organization. NEMLA welcomes both personal and institutional members and those interested should contact: Tish Brennan, Secretary-Treasurer, 408 Benefit Street, Providence, RI 02903.

### Public Library Association Names Cairns

Roberta A.E. Cairns of the East Providence Public Library has been named as the Rhode Island Library Association's representative to the Public Library Association Affiliates Network Committee. The committee recently appointed to improve communication within the public library community will hold its first meeting with state and regional representatives at ALA Midwinter.



# RHODE ISLAND LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

## Individual Membership Application/Renewal Form

January 1, 1986 - December 31, 1986

Members' dues support association activities in the areas of government relations, personnel development, public relations, and intellectual freedom. Your dues include receipt of the RILA Bulletin and reduced conference rates.

For information about institutional and affiliate membership, contact the Chairperson of the Membership Committee: Charlotte Schoonover at 783-8254.

First Time Member	\$8.00	Renewing Library Personnel (dues based on salary)	
Library School Student	\$8.00	Under \$ 8,999	\$ 8.00
(maximum 3 years)		\$ 9,000---\$12,999	\$12.00
Trustee	\$8.00	\$13,000---\$16,999	\$16.00
Retired	\$8.00	\$17,000---and above	\$20.00
Affiliate	\$8.00		

Membership renewal is due beginning January 1, 1986. Memberships not paid by April 1, 1986 will be withdrawn. By paying before the deadline, you will be assured of inclusion in the annual Membership Directory to be published in the May 1986 RILA Bulletin.

Membership dues are tax-deductible; please retain this section for your records.  
RILA membership 1/86 - 12/86      Dues paid \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

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PLEASE COMPLETE THIS SECTION AND RETURN WITH PAYMENT CHECK

All listings in the annual MEMBERSHIP DIRECTORY are taken from the information provided below. Would all RENEWING MEMBERS please check the listing in the May/June RILA Bulletin and note whether the information on this form represents a change from your current listing. If so, please check here \_\_\_\_\_. Please notify the Chairperson of the Membership Committee of future changes of address (the Post Office does not forward the RILA Bulletin), position, or telephone number. Please type or print the following:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Position: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Street/P.O. Box \_\_\_\_\_

Town/City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Library or Affiliation: \_\_\_\_\_

Business Telephone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Dues Paid: \_\_\_\_\_

If you wish to send \$1.00 (or more) to the Washington office of ALA to support its work on behalf of libraries, please add the amount of the donation to the amount paid for dues. ALA Donation : \_\_\_\_\_

If you wish to contribute to the RILA Continuing Education Grant, please add the amount of the donation to the amount paid for dues. RILA Donation: \_\_\_\_\_

TOTAL AMOUNT ENCLOSED \_\_\_\_\_

If you do not want your name to appear in the annual Membership Directory, check here \_\_\_\_\_

Mail this form and your check to: RILA. c/o Charlotte Schoonover, Membership Chair., Kingston Free Library, 1329 Kingstown Rd., Kingston, R.I. 02881 (Telephone 783-8254)

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT OF THE RHODE ISLAND LIBRARY ASSOCIATION!

## REGISTRY OF POTENTIAL JOB-SHARERS

The RILA Personnel Committee is compiling a registry of librarians in Rhode Island and the nearby Massachusetts area who are interested in working as part of a job-sharing team. The list will consist of those who respond to the following questionnaire. It would help those who are considering this work option find job partners. If there is enough interest, the registry could be updated annually.

Job-sharing is a type of alternate work schedule where two people share the responsibilities of one full time job and where salary and benefits are prorated. It implies a career orientation while offering men and women alike the opportunity for professional part-time work often available only on a full time basis.

If you wish to be part of the "Registry of Potential Job-Sharers", please fill out the following questionnaire and mail it to:

Margaret Gardner  
109 Halsey Street  
Providence, RI 02906

by January 1, 1986. Enclose \$1.00 if you wish to receive a copy of the registry which should be available early Spring 1986.

\* \* \* \* \*

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

TELEPHONE: \_\_\_\_\_

DEGREES: \_\_\_\_\_

PREVIOUS LIBRARY EXPERIENCE (Title, Name of Library, Dates):  
\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

AREAS OF INTEREST: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

SCHEDULING REQUIREMENTS: \_\_\_\_\_

JOB LOCATIONS REQUIREMENTS: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Please send me a copy of the "Registry of Potential Job-Sharers"

Enclosed is \$1.00 to cover expenses.



## History Comes Alive in The Library

by Joan Peck

"And Then What Happened, Paul Revere?" was the title of a very special presentation by the Looking Glass Theater at the George Hail Library on May 4th. Old Stone Bank is sponsoring a state-wide community library program to stimulate children to read about historical figures. Entitled Leap Into Literature, the program consists of four plays based on biographies of famous Americans. Old Stone Bank developed the program in consultation with the Rhode Island Department of State Library Services. Together, they selected appealing, historically accurate books and compiled reading lists for older children and adults.

Since we were first notified--about April 10th--of the opportunity to host such a quality production, there were many steps to be taken in a very short time to insure the performance's success at our library. The bank informed librarians, bank personnel, and advertisers of the details for Leap Into Literature at a reception at the bank on April 17th.

**Advertisement:** Most other librarians will have the benefit of professional posters, flyers, etc. Since they were not yet ready, I made posters for library display. I brought a flyer to the schools for distribution to grades 1-6 and followed up a week later with a request to the principal to remind the students over the intercom. Our local paper, the Warren Times-Gazette is always cooperative in publishing library news. Old Stone sent a press

release; and I filled in details; so we had ample publicity in advance and good coverage of the event.

**Logistics:** Weather permitted us to plan an outdoor performance which we felt would give the actors the most possible space. They preferred to be indoors with our beautiful Victorian adult section providing a workable setting. Bank representatives helped to introduce the show and later to present copies of Jean Fritz's book to the library. Fred Flintstone was on hand to greet the children and give them bookmarks, pins, and lollipops.

**Filming:** I thought the program was a natural for cable TV, so I obtained permission from Looking Glass Theater and Old Stone Bank to film it. Jay Barry, President of our Board of Trustees worked out the details; and Joe Osmanski arrived early enough to set up his equipment. He filmed the presentation and performance which was full of audience participation. In fact, at one point, a child's response to "Paul Revere" almost anticipated the actor's next line.

The afternoon ended with refreshments provided by the children and solicited from Valueland. It was a most successful and enjoyable afternoon.

The fall program provided four more presentations including:

And Then What Happened, Paul Revere?  
What's the Big Idea, Benjamin Franklin?  
Benjamin Banneker  
and This Time, Tempe Wick?

### PRESENTED BY THE RHODE ISLAND LIBRARY ASSOCIATION PERSONNEL COMMITTEE MINIMUM SALARY RESOLUTION FOR 1986

Whereas, librarians should be paid a minimum annual salary commensurate with the unique and valuable services they provide to their public and to their communities;

Whereas, the beginning annual salary offered to librarians by employers may be depressed because of limited job opportunities for librarians and because many librarians are women;

Whereas, the RILA Bulletin and other Rhode Island Association publications are financially supported by the members of the Association;

Whereas, all librarians should be concerned about the failure of employers to offer an appropriate minimum salary for all positions;

And whereas, it is important to take a beginning step in upgrading salary standards for all library positions;

Therefore, be it resolved that the Rhode Island Library Association establishes \$18,250 as a recommended starting salary for full-time professional positions; and that part-time work would be compensated proportionally to that full-time salary;

Be it further resolved that the following statement will be appended to all the job openings advertised or listed in its publications: "The Rhode Island Library Association has established a minimum recommended salary of \$18,250 for a full-time beginning librarian in 1986".



## RILA Executive Board and Committees

### 1986 Executive Board:

President	Roberta A.E. Cairns East Providence Public Library
Vice-President/ President Elect	Jonathan S. Tryon URI GSLIS
Secretary	John Fox Cory Cranston Public Library
Treasurer	Anne B. Toll Newport Public Library
Member-at-Large	Marguerite E. Horn Brown University Library
Past President	Connie Lachowicz South Kingstown Public Library
ALA Councilor	Carol DiPrete Roger Williams College Library
NELA Councilor	Judith Halliday Bell South Kingstown Public Library

DSLS has requested a legal opinion from the Rhode Island Attorney General concerning public libraries and the rental of cassettes. DSLS has asked that free lending of "books" in the Rhode Island General Laws 29-4-6 be expanded to include "books or other library property". Although the Government Relations Committee is in support of this change, the Executive Board would like more input from the membership before endorsing or rejecting this recommendation.

The Government Relations Committee and the Board support a Humphry Report II before endorsing a formal Rhode Island Interrelated Library Network.

For more information on these Government Relations Committee issues consult the November 1985 issue of the RILA Legislative Newsletter which is now edited by Peter Fuller of Lincoln Public Library.

Mary Ellen Hardiman submitted the RILA proposed Operating Budget for 1986. The budget totaled \$21,250 and was passed by the Executive Board as well as the membership. (The budget was voted on at the RILA Conference Business Meeting.)

## president's message

The 1985 Annual Conference has come and gone. For some of us the Conference is the culmination of a year's worth of RILA activities. Yet the Conference is also a beginning. It is the beginning of the transition

between the outgoing and incoming Executive Board.

As I look back on 1985 and review the Executive Board and RILA's accomplishments, I am amazed at what was achieved in less than a year. As you all know, two of our legislative endeavors were successful and although RILA's goal to seek additional funding for libraries from the state was not realized, the Executive Board will continue to pursue a course of action which will eventually lead to increased funding for libraries. Some other highlights of this past year include a constitutional change which would make it possible for members of RILA to establish sections, continuing education grants, a revitalized Bulletin, and passage of a nuclear free resolution. Of course, all of this would not have been possible without the cooperation and support of the Executive Board. Vice/President/President-Elect, Robert A.E. Cairns; Past President, Fran Farrell-Bergeron; Secretary, Ellen P. Spilka; Treasurer, Mary Ellen Hardiman; Member-At-Large, Marguerite H. Horn; ALA Councilor Carol DiPrete; and NELA Councilor Judith H. Bell deserve to be recognized and commended for their dedicated efforts on behalf of RILA throughout the year. What made the Executive Board's task easier was knowing that the Committees were being chaired by hardworking individuals who were committed to RILA. To Mary Ellen Hardiman, Budget and Finance; John Bucci and Peggy Shea, Conference; Jennifer Banks and Peter Fuller, Government Relations; Rita Warnock and Janice Wood-Thomas, Intellectual Freedom; Charlotte Schoonover, Membership; Beth Perry, Nominating; Florence Doksansky, Personnel; Linda Walton, Publications; Eileen Socha, Trustees, and Samuel Streit, Federal Relations Coordinator, the Executive Board extends its appreciation to you and your committee's members.

As my term of office draws to a close and I reflect back on 1985, I just want to take this opportunity to say that one of the reasons RILA is such a vital and spirited organization, is due in large part to a membership that cares about the future of libraries in Rhode Island and is willing to do something to protect and promote that future. It is this caring that will stand out in my mind when I look back on my year as President of the Rhode Island Library Association---for me, a very good year.



# What's New in Children's Literature: Trends

By Roberta Stevens

(During the Fall, Roberta gave a workshop on trends in children's literature. Due to space constraints we were not able to print the entire lecture she gave. Below is a synopsis of her workshop. Managing Editor)

Much to everyone's surprise recent Gallup surveys have shown that book reading is up. Some possible explanations for this trend include the public's high education levels and the very strong relationship between book reading and children's education. Librarians as well as booksellers are feeling the pressure from parents and parenting groups to develop children's literature on all levels from "baby-lit" (two months to four years-old) to young adult. The following discusses some of the trends seen today in children's literature.

One of the newest areas of interest is baby-lit. Influential baby-boomers ("yuppies") have set high ambitions for their youngsters, introducing them to books almost as soon as they leave the delivery room. Dorothy Butler, a British bookseller and author, has helped stimulate the publication and use of quality baby-lit through her book Babies Need Books (Atheneum, 1980). The upsurge in bookselling to this segment of the population is unprecedented. A big part of baby-lit is the manipulative books which come with gimmicks such as poke holes and half pages; fold outs; building blocks; and additional accessories. All of these gimmicks get the child's attention and involve them in the story. This trend is currently popular in fiction of all ages. (Some of the manipulative books using squeakers, grippers, zippers and other moveable parts should be carefully scrutinized for usefulness and potential hazard.)

Among middle readers a strong demand exists for paperback series. These range from old standbys such as the "Hardy Boys" to new, trendier ones such as "Sweet Dreams". The paperback series has sharpened the old discussion of "quality" versus "frivolous" and "need" versus "demand". Nevertheless, many of the new, popular series have made their place on the library bookshelf next to the classics. I recently conducted a survey of twenty-two Rhode Island Children's Librarians from various sized libraries concerning their library's collection of twenty-three popular

series titles. Below are the percentages of libraries holding each particular series:

TITLE	#	%
Choose Your Own Adventure	21	95
Race Against Time	4	18
Time Machine	7	32
Twistaplot	3	14
Twilight Romance	6	27
Sweet Dreams	12	55
Wildfire	11	50
First Love	6	27
Two by Two	3	14
Solve Yourself Computer Mystery	4	18
Dark Forces	4	18
Windswept	4	22
Chip Mitchell (Computer)	3	14
Einstein Anderson (Science)	7	32
Rookie Reader	6	27
Baby Board Books	18	82
Pop-Up-Books	6	27
Nancy Drew	21	95
Hardy Boys	20	91
Alfred Hitchcock Three Investigators	20	91
Safety Town	9	41
Danny Dunn	19	86
Encyclopedia Brown	22	100

Librarians were also asked whether any of the mentioned series were showing a particularly waning or growing interest. Only the "Danny Dunn" series by Jay Williams showed a significant response in waning interest. In light of today's lifestyles with its growing technology this series might indeed appear somewhat dated. Growing interest was markedly noted in the areas of baby books followed by these series: "Safety-Town"; "Pop-Up Books"; "Rookie Reader"; "Solve It Yourself Computer Mystery"; "Dark Forces"; and "Sweet Dreams". Another series not listed on the survey but mentioned twice was "Sweet Valley High". Other trends in reading requested by youngsters included TV, movie and cartoon characters as main characters of books.

Interestingly, the survey showed continued interest in older series such as "Nancy Drew"; the "Hardy Boys"; and "Choose Your Own Adventure". Other long-familiar series not on the survey but mentioned by librarians as requested by young readers include the "Bobbsey Twins"; "Trixie Belden"; "Ann of Green Gables"; "Cherry Ames"; and the "Happy Hollisters". The renewed interest in older titles may reflect parental influence. The current generation of parents is recommending series such as "Nancy Drew" and the "Hardy Boys" because they enjoyed reading them as children. Also, as Barbara Moran and Susan

Steinfirst recently pointed out in their article "Why Johnny (and Jane) Read Whodunits in Series", many critics are concerned that fiction for young adults too often falls into the "problem" category. These series, in contrast, are rather non-violent, predictable and chaste. The heroes and heroines provide good role models because they are competent, independent, self-assured, and persist until successful. Moran and Steinfirst believe that moving through these series may aid the adolescent in resolving industry and identity dilemmas defined by Erik Erikson, a noted child psychologist, in Joan Litsitz's book Growing Up Forgotten. Other positive aspects of these familiar series include their concern with problem-solving, and their comforting sameness and simplicity of characters and plots.

Another area which is experiencing a rebirth in children's literature is bibliotherapy. For a while this field was quiet, but as baby-boomer parents seek material for their youngsters they are using tools such as Bookfinder to identify fictionalized material on subjects such as moving, death, divorce, step-families, single parent families, bedwetting, dyslexia and anorexia. An offshoot of these bibliotherapeutic type of requests is the publication in children's literature of topics once considered inappropriate such as child abuse and sex education.

Additional trends in juvenile fiction worth mentioning are the peaking of interest in romance fiction and the decline of ethnic fiction. One of the most discernible trends in young adult (YA) fiction has been the continued focus on realistic romance. Romance publishing grew tremendously from 1981-1984. During the last nine months, however, a local adult romance author and a local reviewer of YA romances for School Library Journal have both independently reported that publishers have begun to cut back with far fewer titles being produced. Writers expect that historical and fantasy fiction, epic romances, and mysteries will pick up the slack in escapist literature for young adults. Ethnic and minority subjects, meanwhile, are also on the decline. There are fewer titles featuring Blacks, Indians, and Hispanics. These titles as well as feminist literature saw a rise in the late '60's and the '70's, but very little is now being published. Possible reasons for this decline include publishers diminishing profits as well as a decline in the popularity of civil rights issues among authors and readers.

Fantasy literature especially dragons and adventure are very appealing to youngsters. The Indiana Jones hero is enticing readers to quest-type literature and adventure stories.

In juvenile non-fiction the trend is toward informational books beginning at a very young age. The tendency is toward browsing type non-fiction books with many of the better titles produced outside of the United States. Another trend in non-fiction literature is due to computers and high technology. Books on robots, specific computer use and computer languages are being published for all levels. Home use of equipment such as VCRs and personal computers may have the side effect of increasing the demand for "solve-it" literature and stories which are interactive rather than passive.

There is still interest in children's literature and the conscientious librarian can lead youngsters from "Sweet Dreams" to Wuthering Heights. The job is no less challenging today than thirty years ago and parents appear to want to strike a partnership. Getting the quality product into the hands of the child is still our goal. Larger numbers of educated parents can be the edge to use in the battle. When given a good book that they like, youngsters come back again and again enthused. With the combination of parents, librarians, teachers, and booksellers, bookloving children are the winners. They will not be counted among America's 20 million illiterates, but will be competent readers and writers enriching their lives with books.

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